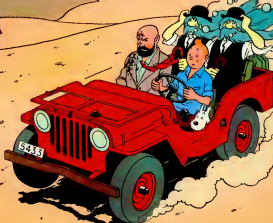


HERGE
THE ADVENTURES OF
TINTIN

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

الذهب الأسود







HERGÉ

THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

الذَّهَبُ الْاَسْوَدُ



METHUEN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

LONDON

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

الذهب الأسود





Next morning ...

"Crisis deepens-afire!"
"On the brink of war?"
"Are we prepared?"
"Call-up for army re-
serve ... Forces on
standby ... Things
look bright, I must say."



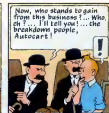
Yes... Tintin
here... Oh, hello
Captain... How
are you? ... Any
news?



I've just had Admiralty orders:
"Captain Haddock. Immediate
Proceed to assume command
of merchant vessel blank
blank" (the name's secret,
of course) "at blank, where
you will receive further
orders." So that's that... I've
been mobilised! ... No,
there won't be time
to see you. I'm off
right away... I'll keep
in touch ...
Bye, Tintin.



Goodbye, Captain,
and good luck.
Let's hope it's
only a false
alarm ...



No doubt about it : Autocart doctors the petrol. When the engine blows up, you send for a breakdown truck. And who do you call? The people who do the most advertising : Autocart !



I suppose it's possible, but...

No buts ! It's a certainty !... We're taking up the case, and by this time next week, we'll have enough evidence to arrest the entire board of directors.



Good luck to you !...

For a start, we'll take a snoop around the Autocart garage...



Shall we look ?...



Well, what do you think ?... It's a perfect cover... gives us a chance to see what goes on inside the place...

Good idea...



Next day...

Now, you know what you're supposed to be doing ?

Certainly we do, sir !



I must say, I'm intrigued by this petrol business...

?



I'd like to get to the bottom of it...

You aren't starting another of your adventures are you? Why don't we retire!



The managing director, please



Meanwhile...

Hello! Autocart to the rescue... Yes... Yes... B 0484... For Mr... ?



...Thomson... It's... the breakdown truck... it's... or... broken down!

Would you like to comment, sir, on the situation created by the deterioration in petrol quality ...

Catastrophic!
The situation is catastrophic ...

Look! In two months, consumption has dropped by 85% ... And it's falling every day ... This very morning ...

SALES CHART

... the airline companies decided to suspend all services because of the dangers of fuel explosions in the air ... Oil shares have slumped to half their value ... the bottom's dropping out of the market ... It's a disaster! ... A catastrophe!

Even worse! What about the international situation? ... Supposing war comes ... breaks out tomorrow? ... Imagine what'll happen ... Ships ... planes ... Tanks ... The armed forces completely immobilised! ... The mind boggles! ... Disaster!

What do you think has caused this sudden change in the petrol?

That's the question we'd all like to answer!
Nothing has changed at the oilfields, or in the refineries, so it has to be sabotage ...

We took samples at the wells, from storage depots, aboard the tankers, in the refineries, and we had them analysed ... Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Then we decided to treat the petrol itself to prevent it exploding. Our top scientists are working night and day on the problem ... to find some way of ...

BOOM

? ?

Another car blowing up! ... Where was I? Oh yes ... My senior research officer says they are on the verge of success in our labs ... I'm expecting a call from him any moment now to say they've found the solution ...

That'll be him ... Do you mind? ...

No, of course ...

RRRING
RRRING

Yes? ... Well, you've got it?
... An answer? ... What?
... Nothing at all?
Nothing? ... I see ... Well, it's a pity ... You'll just have to keep at it ...

What? ... Should you go on with the research? Of course ... surely that's obvious ... Why bother to ask? ...

Because if we're to go on, sir, you'll have to consider building a new laboratory!



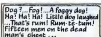












Next morning...



How do you think he is?

No change... He's wandering...



No hope of learning anything useful from that quarter.



Several days later...

There's Kasmakhal

Yes, and there's a launch putting out, with police aboard, I bet.



They've tightened up security... Only natural with the international crisis, and the tension in Khmed...



Military police: we have orders to search the ship.

Oh?... Very well...



Military police: this is a cabin search!



Military police: open your bags!



Aha! As we were told: behind the coat-bags!



These papers were hidden in the radio officer's cabin, sergeant.

Let me see!



Alas! All very interesting... A shipment of arms to Sheikh Bab El Ehr!

I assure you, sergeant, I...



Keep your hands off! ... We're police officers! We'll see you pay for this!

To be precise: you'll see we pay for this!



Heroin in their baggage, sir... And they're pretending to be police officers!

Indeed!



We were tricked, sergeant... An agent from Naval Intelligence gave us the package. He said it contained secret documents.

And where is this 'agent', eh?



He's here on board, sergeant... But he suddenly seems to have lost his wife...

Meaning that we can't question him, I suppose!... A neat little story... But it just happens that I am very far from losing MY wife!



What a fool I've been! ... Another false trail!



All right, get those three bright boys into the launch. They'll be interrogated ashore.

But...

I...



Who've you got there?

The two are just a couple of drug-smugglers, I think... But the young one has important documents to do with 'Bab El Ehr'.



Excellent work! Our noble sheik will reward you when he comes to power! ... Go now!



Bab El Ehr must be informed!





That evening...

I have come from Khazimkhel, noble master. There I received news: the Amir's soldiers have arrested a young foreigner.

Well?



One of the guards works for us. He said he'd found papers on the prisoner... papers referring to an important shipment of arms for you.

The young man shall escape and be brought here to me!



Next morning...

Come with me. You're going to the special security pad. The secret police want you for questioning.



There they are, Moham-mad! Put your foot down!



Over here!



Hurry!



Meanwhile ...

We've checked your papers. They're in order. You can go.

Thank you. What about Tintin?

Your friend?... He was seized on his way here by Bab El Ehs man.

Now we've got to find them... And that's a thankless job. They made the snatch, and vanished without trace. Still, there's a £5000 reward for anyone who leads us to the chick's hideout.

Five thousand pounds! You needn't say that again!... By this time next week we'll bring you Bab El Ehs trussed like a turkey!

Very good! May Allah go with you!

Next morning...

Five thousand pounds reward!

Here is the young foreigner brought by your partisans, noble sheik.

Enter!

Greetings, and welcome, young stranger... Heaven will bless you for embracing our great cause... Now, when do the guns arrive?

What guns?

What guns? Our guns, our shipment of arms... You've brought news of their delivery, isn't that so?

Me?... Not me, most noble sheik! ...

You lied to me, son of a mangy dog!

Oh, no! most powerful master... It was the guard who told me... I swear by Allah!

That's quite true, noble sheik. Some papers were found in my cabin... but they didn't belong to me... And I've no idea who put them there...

It's a trick... A miserable trick to discover my hideout... I suppose you think I'll let you go?... To run home and betray us to the police, those swivelling lap-dogs of Ben Kalish Ezab?... Never! You stay here with us. You are my prisoner!







Meanwhile...



Allah be praised!... See! The well of Bir Kegg!

Indeed!



Water!... At last!... I'm dying of thirst...



The prisoner has fallen.
he is finished!

Untie his hands:
we will abandon him!



Woooo!... Woooo!
Murderers!
Rotten sand-hoppers!





He's coming round
... at last!

Where am I? ... What
happened? ... Oh... I
remember... The Arabs...
crossing the desert ...
the dried-up well ...



The devil! They left
me behind... We've
got to get out of this
somewhere...



Many weary
hours later...



There!... I can't believe
it!... A pipeline... palm
trees... oasis! Look
Snowy! We're saved!



If only...if only it
isn't a mirage!



A well!...Water
...Thank heavens!
... Water!



Lovely, living
water!

Meanwhile, some
miles away...



Hey presto!
Another mirage!

You think so? ... It looks
real to me... If I were
you I'd drive round it...



Me? Drive round something
that's nothing but some-
thing you think is something
but is nothing?... I never
heard such rubbish!... We're
going straight ahead!



To be precise: I told
you so!









Crumb! I know who that is! It's Doctor Muller! Oh



The horses! If they spot the horses I'm done for!



What about Tirtin? ... Kill him now! ... We, they'll hear the shot... Ah, he's out cold; there's plenty of time to deal with him later.



So, they're gone! That was a close thing...



Quick! I must take care of Tirtin... I was careless... I should have checked his brains out with my rifle butt...



Towfel!



Just in time!



What's all that racket?



Now what?... Any more?... No, it's all quiet; he's stopped shooting... Perhaps it's a brick...



Hey, what's that?... Galloping horses? He can't have...



Yes! He's made off with both horses, the thief!



Here I am, back to square one... with a bump on my head as well!



On our way, Smokey... we haven't any choice...



We must follow his tracks!



Let me hear that bragg again and he'd better watch his trousers!

What's it all about?... What's that gangster Müller doing here?... And why should he want to wreck the pipeline?... When he had me at his mercy, why didn't he kill me?... I just don't have any of the answers.



Hello... I can't be mistaken... Let's take a closer look...



They're wheelmarks, Snowy... This really is a bit of luck!



Let's see... I'd say they were tyres on a jeep... The sand and pebbles were thrown back by the wheels, so it was travelling that way. We'll go in the same direction...



And we'll worry about our friend Müller later.



Meanwhile...

I don't like it, Thomson... If we don't get somewhere soon...



It's all right!... Look!... There!... Tracks of a car!

Quite correct! And they aren't a mirage, either!



All we do is follow the tracks and we're saved!



An hour later...

Ha-hoey!... More tracks!... A second car joined the first one...



A real stroke of luck hitting this road.

To be precise, we've really had a stroke!



Another hour later...

There!... A third car joined the other two!... We're on a very busy road...



Several hours go by...

Another one!... That makes the seventh.



We're obviously getting near a big town and... Hey! Stop!... What's that there, ahead of us?





Ooh! Here it comes! We're right in the middle of it! ... Most of all, the wind and sand will wipe out all the tracks ...



This awful sand... gets in your eyes... and your mouth... We can't go on! ... Only one thing to do ...



Wait till the storm blows over ...



Ssh! ... I heard something... There it is again... A car engine!



We can't go on like this. We must raise the windscreen and put up the hood ...



OOEE!



Ugh! this sand!

Careful! You mustn't let go ...



Don't worry, I'm holding it.



OOEE!



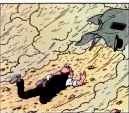
Come on... Snowy!



Hang on tight! ... Don't let it get away!



OOEE!



OOEE!



?



What happened?



Good heavens! A boulder belonging to one of the Thompsons!...How can they possibly...? Surely they couldn't...?



Thompson!...Come!...Thompson!



Thompson! Come!...It's me, Timmie!



...Ed, Thomson, Tim, in...

?

I say, did you hear anything? ...No?... I thought I heard something over there, looking our names.

Come along, come along! It's just another mirage. Get in. We must move!



They've started the engine...They didn't hear me...



My gun!...A shot! They'll certainly hear that



BANG

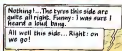
!



Hooway! They heard me! They've stopped again.



Come!...Thompson!



Nothing!...The tyres this side are quite all right. Funny: I was sure I heard a loud bang.

All well this side... Right: on we go!



COOEE!... THOMPSON!



...OMSON...



?

?



A mirage, my dear fellow... And not for the first time... I can't think why you're still taken in by them... Come along!



The sound of the engine is fading... Too late... They've gone...



It's all over, Snowy... We're done for...



Heigh-ho! That's nice!







What's that gangster doing here?
... I must keep my eyes open!



It's like this, your Highness.
Yesterday evening I was in a
jeep driven by two of my friends.
They arrived in the city ...



Most noble emir, I have come to
beg your mercy. For days and
days these two men were wander-
ing in the desert. They lost their
way and were at the end of their
strength. That is why ...



Gladly, your Highness ... But it
is a long story and I fear to
impose upon you.



Two hours go by ...

At that moment there was a
burst of flame: they had
fired the pipeline.



So it's Bab El Ehr who ...

Yes, he's trying to depose me, with
the help of Skell Fobolcum. Should
he come to power he would leave the
oil concessions in Khemedite Arabia
to Skell, and expel Arabes who
operate with my agreement. That's
why Bab El Ehr and his brigade
attack the Arabes installations ...



Now, the present contract I
have with Arabes is soon due to
expire. If I wished I could
then sign a new contract,
but with Skell. That is the
proposal made to me by
Professor Smith who left
here just as you arrived.



It's very simple: if I sign a contract with Skell the attacker, will cease immediately. So why do I refuse to sign Professor Smith's contract?

Yes, why I wonder?



It is strange, I do not know why I am telling you all this... You are a stranger... I have no reason, but I trust you. So... Inch Allah!... I refuse to sign the contract because I do not like Professor Smith and I do not like his Skell Petroleum.

Oh?



But I have interrupted your story... You were telling how the saboteurs had blown up his pipeline.

They came running back and remounted their horses. I remained hidden behind the rocks... Suddenly...



Master!... Master!... Oh! Master!

What is it?... Who dares to disturb us?



Oh, Master! Master!... Your son!...

Well, Ah Ben Mahmoud, what new prank is my little Ismael playing this time?



Heaven grant that it is indeed a prank! Master, your son has disappeared!

Ha! ha! ha! ha!... Disappeared!... If you know my son you would laugh as I do. He's the naughtiest young rascal anyone ever saw!... Every day he thinks up some new little wickednesses... But stops with me, you see for yourself...



He was in the garden, Master...

Yes, yes, Ah Ben Mahmoud, calm yourself!



There's the little motor car I gave him last week... on his sixth birthday...



Abdullah!... Abdullah!... Where are you, my treasure?



Abdullah!... Come out now, my little sugar plum!



Abdullah, my baby Ismael-Kin...



Abdullah!... Abdullah!... Where are you hiding?



Abdullah, you little rascal, if you don't come at once Papa will be cross!



Excuse me, Highness, but does your son wear a blue robe?

A blue robe?... Abdullah?... No!... Why do you ask?



Here's a piece of blue cloth I just found, caught on a branch... Under the tree are some very deep footmarks... Obviously someone was hiding in the tree, and then jumped to the ground...



Perhaps... Yes... But...

There's your son's motor car... It has been shoved to one side, as you can see from the tyre marks...



But I don't understand... What are you trying to say?



I hardly dare tell you, Highness... I fear the worst... Come with me... There will be other clues...



There! I knew it!... More footmarks!...



And here... and there... And look! Marks on the wall! This is where they must have climbed over...



They?... Who?



The man who kidnapped your son, Highness!

The man who... You're mad!... My son?... Kidnapped?... Why?... Tell me why anyone should kidnap my son!... You're crazy!... You've made all this up!... You're lying!... Yes you're lying, like all infidels!...



Where is Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab?

Over there, by the wall, with the stranger...



A horseman brought the letter, Master... Then rode away like the wind, out into the desert.



BY ALLAH!



It's unbelievable!... Here, read this letter...



Excuse me, Highness... it is in Arabic...

Oh yes, I will translate for you...



"To Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab... If you want to see your son again, throw Arabesque out of Khemed!" It's signed: Bab El Ekr.



Yes, it's what I would expect!

Bab El Ekr! Bab El Ekr! Son of a mangy dog! ... Grandson of a scurvy jackal! ... Great grandson of a mauling vulture! ... My revenge will be terrible! ... I will impale you on a spit! ... I will roast you over a slow fire! ... I will pull out your beard, one hair at a time! ... And I will stuff it down your throat! ...



But we must act! Where is my military adviser?



Ohhh! ... His little car!



Bab-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo! ... My little Abdullah! ... My little honeybun, where are you! ... My little peppermint cream! ... Baa-hoo-hoo ... hoo ... hoo ...



Highness, you must calm yourself!

Woo-hee-hoo ... My little angel! ... Baa-woo-hee-hoo!



My little Abdullah! ... Aaaahh ... Aaaahh ... Aaaahh ... Aaaahh ...



TCHOO! ... Aaaahh ... TCHOO! ... Aaaahh TCHOO!



You see ... Aaaahh ... TCHOO! ... It was one of his last tricks: he'd just fessed out about ... Aaaahh TCHOO! ... about Aaaahh TCHOO! ... about sneezing pee-on-ow-der! ... He wanted a bee for his birthday ...



A few minutes later ...

This is Yusuf Ben Mufrid, my military adviser. He'll explain his plan of campaign ... A cigarette?



No, thank you. I don't smoke.

Well, noble master ... In two hours, three hundred horsemen will be ready to leave in pursuit of Bab El Ekr's Followers. I have already given orders for scouts to follow their trail ... Briefly, I can say to you ...



Allah is good! ... My little poppet replaced all my best lozenges with his brick cigars! ... Wasn't that sweet? ...



My one and only little chickadee! ...



By the beard of the prophet! That wretched little gentitude has changed all my best Sonarines for his filthy joke cigarettes! ...





Another of his confounded tricks! ... Now where did he get that?



Well, he's certainly quite unmistakable! ... Now I must start my search, Highness ... Could you fit me out with some different clothes? ... And I'd like some information on Doctor Mül ... I mean Professor Smith.



Professor Smith?... You think he can help my son?... Perhaps...



He's an archaeologist, digging for remains of the ancient civilisations that once flourished in these lands... At the same time he acts as representative for Shell Petroleum.



Yes, in Wadadlah, my capital ... about twenty miles from here, on the coast. He lives in an enormous palace, perched like an eagle's nest on the top of a cliff.



Take no notice ... Just a cap... Abdullah scattered them everywhere ... They lived things up in the palace...



Where was I?... Oh, yes ... The two friends I mentioned ... I have a great favour to ask on their behalf: please treat them as your honoured guests. Lavish every comfort upon them; take every possible care of them ... But if you want me to find your son, for pity's sake don't allow them out of the palace on any pretext whatever.



Next morning, in Wadadlah ...



That must be Professor Smith's palace, up there ...





(1) See Cigars of the Pharaoh

All right?

There... yes... a big mouse for a small buzz!



Excuse me... A customer ... I'll be back in a moment.

Please don't worry ... I'll clean up the mess while you're gone.



You see what happens to Nobby Parkers!



There, all tidied up... Hello, a radio. I wonder if I can get any more?



What's the matter? ... Dead?... It doesn't even light up...



Oh, I see. The plug isn't connected.



There, it should work now.



WOOAAAH!



The wrong plug? Let's try this one...



Now...



Ah! My beauty  past compare...  These jewels  bright...  



... I hear  ... Was I ever Margarita? Come, reply... 



WHEET... CRACK... CRACK...
dernières nouvelles d'Europe... CRACK...
RAY... RAY...
RAY... RAY...
RAY... RAY...
The European news service...



Following today's meeting of foreign ministers a spokesman indicated that there had been a definite easing of tension... An easing too of the outbreak of engine explosions which has bedevilled many countries. The epidemic seems to have ceased as mysteriously as it began.



In a statement, Mr Peter Barrett, Head of the Fuel Research Division of the Ministry of Transport, told our reporter he had nothing to say, except that his department's investigations were continuing...



Here we are... Ah, you're listening to the news...



Now, what were we talking about?

About Professor Smith. You were saying that he isn't particularly likeable.



That's true... But he's extremely rich, and I'm his main supplier... So you see... My customers include all the top people in the area... At least, not quite all... Not the Emir, alas!... What a man!... One of the best!... Which is more than can be said for his nasty little son... A real pest, young Prince Abdullah!... But you won't have heard: he's just been kidnapped!



Look here, Sheikh Oliveira, would you like to be appointed official supplier to the Emir Benkalish Ezab?



Would I like it?... Of course!... It would be the crowning glory of my career... But... what would I have to do?

Help me recover Prince Abdullah... To do that, smuggle me into Professor Smith's house...



Professor Smith... What for?... Well, if you like... It's quite easy... I go there each morning...

The next morning...



Salaam alikum, Murad!

Alaikum sala... Tchou!!

Who is the young stranger?



My nephew Alvaro... I want him to meet the palace servants.

My friends, let me introduce my nephew Alvaro, just arrived from Portugal... He's an orphan, poor lad... I've taken him into my family...



ATCHOO!

Just between ourselves he's a little... well... a bit simple... Not surprising after what's happened to him... A dreadful story... Just imagine, his father, who was a well-known chili farmer... Excuse me, just a minute...



Be a good boy, Alvaro... While I'm busy with the gentlemen, you run and play in the garden... I'll call you...



Yes, Uncle.

But listen carefully, Alvaro... Don't make a noise. Professor Smith is working in his study upstairs. You're not to disturb him...



No, Uncle.



That's fine... He'll keep them safely occupied with one of his endless stories... but I mustn't waste time...





The key's in the door... And the door's locked from the inside!... But there's no-one here... It doesn't make sense...



I'll work that out later... First, let's have a look at the papers on his desk...



What's in this folder?



Hallo... A file of newspaper cuttings...



Now why should Dr Müller be interested in that petrol mystery? ... I wonder if...



ATCHOO!

?!



Great snakes! The hearth is opening! ... I must hide!



TCHOO!



What's he doing in that corner? ... Ah, I see... That's where a secret button for the trapdoor must be hidden.



Aah... Aah... TCHOO! ... Aah... TCHOO! ... Ah, that little pest!



Lucky I persuaded him to swap his confounded bag of snuffing powder for a pair of roller-skates...



There... I'll burn it in a minute...



Dread! He's starting to write!



Let's hope he won't be long... I'm beginning to get 'pine and needles'...





Where? Saved again! He's still out cold... Quick, I must blow him up, gag him, hide him somewhere... and telephone to the Emir...



Meanwhile, in the kitchen...

...Nina! The poor woman never got over it. She died of grief and shame, at the age of ninety-seven. Her husband, broken-hearted, soon followed her to the grave. But that wasn't the end of the terrible tragedy: this unhappy family had to suffer... One day, thirteen



There, Doctor Müller... That's taken care of you!



Hallo? ... Hallo? ... Is that the royal palace? ... I want to speak to His Highness... Tintin ... Hallo? Is that you, Highness?



Tintin? ... Yes... Where are you? ... With Professor Smith? ... What? ... My son there? ... A prisoner? ... What's that you say? ... What? ... Oh! You deceived! Blame me, you!



You must send men to Wadoodah... Have the palace surrounded... Meanwhile, I'll try to rescue the prince...



I can't say I like those boys, but this time I'd better be armed.



Now let's have a closer look at this ...



Concrete tunnels! An underground fortress ...



What's this?



A bunker ...



...with gun ports commanding the town and the harbour...



Crumb! What a place! ... A real Maginot Line!



AAAAH...



TCHOOO!



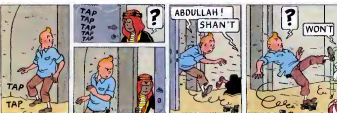
Is that you, boss?



Boss? ... Is that you, boss?













Seems to be coming down ...



That all?



This way! ... Come on! ...

?



Tintin! Open up! Open up! It's me!

Servey! It's Servey! ... And surely it can't be ... that voice! It's ...

Wooah! Wooah!



Found you! Heeey!

Captain Haddock! ... And dear old Servey!



That's a friendly welcome, I must say!

Out! Quick! It's starting again!

PFFT

PFFT



All in the bag! ... That's terrific! ... How did you manage it? ... And what are you doing here anyway, Captain?



Well, I'll tell you ... It's like this ... Just imagine ...

Sorry, Captain ... First, have they found the man's son?



I don't know ... I haven't seen him ... At least, not since I got here ...

Quick! Quick! We must look ...



Is the man there?

Yes, he was just now ... I was going to tell you ...



There!



Tintin, Tintin! Everything is lost! We arrived too late ... that French professor escaped in a car ... and he took my little duckling with him ...

But someone's gone after them?



Yes, yes, of course ... My harem is in hot pursuit ... And your two friends with mouse-bags ... in a jeep ...

Oh dear! In that case ...



AHA!

?

?



Moving! ... Where we moving! ... Oh, now I see... It must have been that other car... It passed us so fast I thought we were standing still ...



No! I want one now! I want an icecream! I want an icecream! ... Then I want to go home! ...



Waaaah! ... Waaaah! ... Waaaah! ...



No! I want to sit here! ... I hate you! ... I shall tell my papa... And my papa is the Emir! ...



I know... I know...

You, you're right ... I was just going to tell you... As I said, it was really quite simple ... but at the same time rather complicated ... There they are! Another dust-cloud! ... This time it's certainly Müller!



Great snakes! ... Snakes! ... what's happened to them?



Look at their tracks! ... Müller must have lost control of the car... it went over, and caught fire... Let's hope nothing's happened to the prince ...



Can we have another one?
Ssh!... A car's stopping... Doors banging... Wait!...







A little later...

Master!... So! Your car is returning!

With Abdullah?



With Abdullah? Abdullah!... My little sugar plum!... My darling chocolate candy!

He can have his sugar plum, as far as I'm concerned!



My sweetest strawberry angel cake!...

At last! Now I can have a quick smoke!

WAAAH!



Waaah! Waaah! Waaah! Want to stay with Blistering-Barnacles!



My nose!... Billions of blistering barnacles!... My nose!



Again!... Burn your nose again!

Come, come, don't be cross... It was his little game... a jolly prank...



Ah, here comes Tintin...



So the Thompsons are in hospital!... No one knows yet what's the matter... They have to have their hair cut every half hour... I sent at once to Professor Calculus, to ask him to analyse these filthy tablets, the ones Müller...



Oh... of course, Higheese, you don't know... Müller is the real name of Professor Smith.

That reptile! Where is he? Impale him instantly!



Müller is in the hands of the police, Higheese. And I've given my word that he'll have a fair trial.

By Allah! How you Westerners complicate things!... We men of the East are far more expeditious!



The trial will attract plenty of attention!... I found these papers on him. They prove Müller was a secret agent for a major foreign power... In the event of war it was his job to use his men to seize the oil wells, which explains the veritable arsenal we found under his palace... And he was already conspiring to oust Arabex in favour of Shell.



Those are the essentials. A police search of his palace, and a full interrogation of Müller and his accomplices will fill in the details. Quite simply, it's an episode in the perpetual warfare over oil... the world's black gold...



Some days later...

Tintin! Tintin!... A letter from Calculus!



My friends, I have immediately analysed the tablets you sent. I have discovered that if you add only a minute part to petrol, its explosive quality is increased to an alarming degree.

By God and now I have concluded that one single tablet dissolved in a tank holding 5000 gallons of petrol would be enough to cause a

Anyway, Captain, that solves the mystery of cars blowing up... Hey, what's the matter? What have you got there?

Thundering typhoons!





Blistering barnacles!
Look at that!



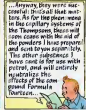
My house, by the way!
What's that nitwit
nipskin done to my beautiful house?!

Let's read on:
he's sure to explain ...



... The research was
exceedingly difficult.
I enclose a photo-
graph of Mortinspike
after my first
experiments ...

His first?...
Did he do some
more?!!



... Anyway, boy were suc-
cessful! That's all that mat-
ters. As for the plan: mine
in the capillary systems of
the Thompsons. These will
soon cease with the aid of
the powders I have prepared
and sent to you separately.
The other substance I
have sent is for use with
petrol, and will entirely
neutralize the
effects of the com-
pound Formula
Fourteen...



Some weeks later...



"Each day of the Müller trial
brings startling new disclosures.
Today the whole mystery of the ex-
ploding car engine was revealed.
It is now known that a major foreign
power had developed a new chemical,
known simply as Formula Fourteen.
This chemical, added to petrol, increases
its exploding qualities tenfold."



"In the event of war, the agents of
this foreign power could easily conceiv-
ably use the oil resources of the other
side. The recent outbreak of car ex-
ploding was by way of a trial, on a
reduced scale, of this new tactic.
Thanks to the work of the famous
boy reporter, Tintin, the secret of
Formula Fourteen has been discovered."



"...An effective antidote has im-
mediately been developed by his
distinguished colleague, Professor
Cuthbert Calculus, to neutralize the
effects of the chemical, by his prompt
action, Tintin has undoubtedly pre-
vented the outbreak of war.
Better news top of the detective:
Thomson and Thompson who lead-
vortently swallowed some Formula
Fourteen. They are now out of danger,
and well on the way to recovery."



What about that? We had a narrow
escape, eh?... If it hadn't been for the
Thompsons, we'd be at war!... You
know, Captain, you still haven't told
us how you came to be mixed up in
this business...

Oh, yes... Well, I... thank
you, Highness...



Well... PFF... It's like this...
PFF... I think I told you...
PFF... it's quite simple really...
... PFF... and at the same time
rather complicated...



Would you believe
it... PFF... I...
PFF...



Another of Abdullah's little tricks!
... And he promised me he'd be good!
... Ah, what adorable little ways
he has!




Adorable!... Adorable!... I'll say he is!...
Well, if you want to hear my story, it
won't be from me!... Blistering barnac-
les, as far as I'm concerned, this is
the end!



END







THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN

LAND OF BLACK GOLD

Who is trying to sabotage European supplies of petrol, and why? An international situation develops which threatens to result in war unless the saboteurs can be brought to justice. Tintin is called in, and he and Snowy are soon following the tracks of the evil and dangerous plotters to the deserts and towns of the Middle East, where their efforts to find them are complicated by hazards difficult even by Tintin's standards . . .

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